

GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY FOR NEW BUILDING FOR THE MISSOURI RICE RESEARCH AND MERCHANDISING COUNCIL

Greg Branum, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development, participated in a ground breaking ceremony on Thursday, August 24, 2006, with Gary Murphy, President of the Missouri Rice Research and Merchandising Council.

The ceremony marks the beginning of the construction of a 40' x 75' main building and a 15' addition to the existing shop building on the rice research farm located in Glennonville, MO. The new building will provide offices for the rice researchers and provide storage for the rice research equipment.

The building improvements are funded by a \$125,000 grant from Rural Development's Rural Business Enterprise Grant program.

"Rice acreage has significantly expanded in Missouri over the last decade, and we need the facilities to ensure that this important crop continues to grow in our state," said U. S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson. "Missouri has always been on the cutting edge of new agribusiness technologies that enhance the value of our produce. I am very excited about this expanded building that will keep that mission alive. The support of our Missouri senators has been central to this effort, so I want to thank Kit Bond and Jim Talent for their involvement and USDA Rural Development for identifying this important opportunity."

"USDA Rural Development is pleased to be a part of this expansion for the Rice Research and Merchandising Council," said Greg Branum, State Director, Missouri Rural Development. "Providing suitable facilities for enhancing educational and economic opportunities is an excellent example of USDA Rural Development programs assisting rural residents. They mirror President Bush's initiatives and exemplify the Rural Development mission - committed to the future of rural communities."

"We are excited to break ground and get started with the expansion of our facilities so that we can better serve the rice growers in the area," said Gary Murphy, President of the Council. "The grant funds from Rural Development are very valuable to these improvements!"

Branum, added that special thanks are extended to our federal elected officials including U.S. Senators "Kit" Bond and Jim Talent plus U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson for making available Federal monies for funding this kind of project providing essential research and educational services for the Missouri Rice Research and Merchandising Council.

Anyone seeking more information about the Rural Business Enterprise Grant and other Rural Development programs may visit Rural Development's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo>, or by contacting Pam Anglin, Area Director for southeast Missouri at Pam.Anglin@mo.usda.gov by calling 573-624-5939.



Front row: John Burnett, Vice Pres. Missouri. Rice Research, Gary Murphy, President Missouri Rice Research, Lenda Birnel, RL Person Construction Company, Donn Beighley, Missouri Rice Breeder, and Greg Branum, Missouri State Director Rural Development

Back row: Brad Jarrell, State Senator Rob Mayer's Office, Randy Dickens, Missouri Rice Technician, Cathy Dickens, Missouri Rice Technician, Richard Davis, Rural Development Area Specialist, Phyllis Minner, Area Specialist Rural Development Bill Green, Engineer, Pam Anglin, Area Director Rural Development, Tresia Webb, Rural Development Manager, and Pam Flanigan, Rural Development Technician.

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